

THE PERSECUTING SPIRIT

BY ADDISON HARPER.

TEXT: "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. and the Governor said: Why what evil hath he done?"—Matt. 27: 22, 23.

In presenting the above text for the consideration of the reader, I do so feeling my great inability of doing the subject anything like justice, but will endeavor with the help of God, to present such thoughts as may be presented to my mind, hoping some good may be accomplished. Reader, follow me to the scene of Christ's crucifixion, and with me take a view of Christ historically, and you will say with Pilate, "Why what evil hath he done?" Pilate was one of the outsiders, he was not a party to their councils. He knew not of their schemes, and what prompted those high priests to cry aloud, "Crucify him." If he had he would not have asked the question, "Why what evil hath he done?" Those priests were versed in the Law and the Prophets. They were looking forward to the coming of a Redeemer, who would deliver their nation from Roman bondage, and it was natural to suppose they expected to occupy high positions in his government. They certainly had not a correct idea of the scope of Christ's mission, the "salvation of man", the establishing of a kingdom based upon eternal justice, bringing into one family all the nations of the earth. John appears as the forerunner of Christ. The people congregate and are baptized of him in Jordan. He pointing to another greater than himself, who would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The Son of God repairs to Jordan, is baptized in Jordan, acknowledged by the Father, selects his apostles, proceeds to proclaim these eternal truths brought from the Father, but ignores these high priests. This was his offense. They became his avowed enemies, and determined on his death. They no doubt saw that if they would continue to reign Christ must die. Christ at once proceeds to lay bare their nakedness by showing their formalities, hypocracies and inconsistencies. Had Pilate known all this, instead of asking, "Why, what evil hath he done?" he would have said, "I understand the cause of your bitter animosity against this good man. He has laid your true characters bare before the world. He has proclaimed you to be what you truly are, 'whited sepulchres full of all uncleanness and dead men's bones.'" My dear reader, let us pause and take a view of the field that is before us. This truth will be presented to our minds:—all reformers will meet with opposition of the bitterest kind from those in power. The history of the world bears evidence to this truth. Christ, the great reformer, whose doctrine has stood the test of criticism for over eighteen hundred years, and at this day stands as pure gold without alloy, acknowledged a pure teacher of purity, and one who died to save others—yet in his day was scorned, maligned, persecuted and crucified. Let us therefore not be discouraged if we are persecuted for Christ's sake, but consider that he, too, had to suffer. But let us go on denouncing evil and proclaiming the truth. Let us manifest the spirit of Christ and be tolerant towards others. Let reason assume her empire, and with love for the compass and man's good our aim, with these principles go forth to conquer, and the time is not far distant when the bars on meeting house doors will be removed and the house built for the Lord's service open for His service.

Oh! how it pains the heart to view the past and with sorrow contemplate the crimes perpetrated in the name of christianity. Bunyan found a prison to write his Pilgrim's Progress, where he was placed in the name of christianity. The so-called Holy Inquisition was established in the name of christianity, and met in the gloomy hours of night to pass sentences on heretics. In the name of christianity the torch was applied and the doomed victim consumed at the stake. A very distinguished lady who fell a victim during the reign of terror in France, to the same fanatical spirit that crucified the Son of God, but in the name of liberty, was led to exclaim, "Oh, Liberty, how many crimes are perpetrated in thy name!" May I not in truth say, Oh, Religion, how many crimes are perpetrated in thy name! Thank God, this glorious nineteenth century is arising from this maelstrom of bigotry, intolerance and superstition of the darker ages. I hope the time is not far distant when true christianity will be the ruling power of the world.

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The fact of what God has done for man is mightier than all the questions about, objections to, and statements of, how he did it.

It is good for us to keep some account of our prayers, that we may not unsay in our practices anything that we said in our prayers.

Woman's Work vs. Man's Work.

I do not believe that one man in one thousand, and possibly not one in ten thousand, has an idea of the exhausting nature of woman's work in-doors in the capacity of wife and housekeeper.

"You've only got the house to look after," says the good husband, or the husband who thinks himself good to his wife. Now the "house" is a small hotel. Every family keeps its small hotel or private boarding house of its own, and every wife is more or less a landlady. To keep a hotel for four or six persons involves nearly as much plan and labor in certain departments as for a dozen persons. It costs no more time or labor to market for twelve than it does six. With proper management it requires but little more fuel or labor to cook for twelve than six.

If you experiment in this matter, you will find that the greater the number of occupations that brain and muscle are required to be exercised upon within a given time, the sooner are brain and muscle or nerve force exhausted. The man goes to his work in the morning. That business may involve one or a few lines of action. He is a book-keeper, a clerk, a writer, a mechanic, an agent, an auctioneer, etc. He has been "fixed up" for his day's work at the "hotel," rested, cooked for, washed for, and cared for. He is the "Head of the house," the bread-winner, the one who makes all the money, and of course, he must not be pestered with small anxieties.

Small anxieties! These are left for the wife—the landlady. Infants to care for or children to be got ready for school; clothing to repair; "What shall we have for dinner?" the eternity of having three meals per day with its monotonous routine of setting the table and washing up, floors to sweep and furniture to be dusted, unruly help to be trained or to be endured. Grocer's bills, milk bills, gas bills, all sorts of bills coming in, possibly with no money on hand to meet them, and a dread of mentioning such bills to the man who must pay them. Beds to be made and the help to be reproved for being so careless with the crockery. This is not half. Any "good wife and housekeeper" can supply the hundred and odd demands made on her from seven o'clock in the morning until twelve at noon, and these are very much the same from day to day. Though there be hired hands to do the work, that doesn't lessen the responsibility. The weight of the burden centers on the responsible head of the small family hotel, and if there be ought lacking, she knows where the growl is to come from.

I learned something of the varied character of woman's family work, through being my own housekeeper for several years, while a miner in California, and a year's experience in the capacity of cook and steward on a whaling schooner. But I was spared one burden I had no children to look after.

I would rather work for four hours with a pick and shovel in the open air, than "do housework" two hours in-doors. The woman in a vast majority of cases hasn't even pure air to breathe while so engaged. It is a food and a source of strength—if pure. And hers is a finer organization—the one most easily exhausted—the one requiring the most time and rest for recuperation.

Now, "keeping the small family hotel" and raising the family in it is a "woman's sphere". It is her "sphere", because we men have fixed it so. It's a beautiful thing to be the wife, the mother, and to rule over the home and be the "Queen of the throne," to wrestle with the pots and pans, and if she ventures, as we leave to hint that the home exchequer needs replenishing, perhaps the sign or look as if wondering that it should take so much to run "Home, Sweet Home."

"A woman's work is never done," is the old adage. A man's work is done when he comes to the hotel at night, eats his supper, puts on his slippers and cheers up his wife by reading the newspaper to himself, while she darns stockings, and occasionally darts into an adjoining room to quiet those children, whose clamor may disturb the landlord, who pays the running expenses of the hotel—cheerfully or otherwise according to his nature. Perhaps he does not stay at home to read the newspaper. He may have "business" outside. Husbands of two or more years' standing do often have "business" which takes them out at night. "Business" is a convenient thing for an experienced husband to have in the house. The hotel sometimes proves monotonous, though ever so well kept, and for him his monotony may cause an attack of "business."—*Prentice Mulford, in Country-side.*

A flatterer spreads a snare for a friend's feet, but a sinner lays a snare for himself.

The talent to sing is one of the richest of God's gifts, and he will require it at the hands of those who possess it.